



**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th September 2023
at the Pavilion, Fownhope**

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Number:

Present:

Cllrs Kevin Braybrook (in the Chair), Tim Jones, Gareth Williams, Mike Simmons, Frank Hemming, Will Morris, Lavinia Smith and Michael Short; with Claire Patel joining following her co-option.

In attendance:

23 members of the public; Ward Cllr Graham Biggs; Clerk Helen Tinson

1) **Apologies for Absence:** There were none. Claire Patel had sent apologies for her late arrival.

2) **To co-opt a new Councillor to fill a current vacancy:** This item was deferred to later in the meeting, pending the arrival of Claire Patel.

3) **To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Written Requests for Dispensation:**

To receive any declarations of interest: Cllr Tim Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7b, Planning 231392/3; Cllr Mike Simmons declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10f, FRFA fees. The Declarations of Interest book was signed accordingly.

To consider any written requests for dispensations: there were none.

4) **Open Session:**

a) **Report from Ward Councillor:** This item was deferred to later in the meeting, pending the arrival of Cllr Biggs.

b) **Representation from the Public:** The Chairman informed the meeting that he would open the meeting to comments on Planning Application 232195 under Agenda Item 7. Comments on other matters were requested.

A member of the public raised a complaint that the bin on Common Hill Lane is repeatedly missed from the regular waste collection and is currently in an unacceptable condition. It was noted that the Clerk has already reported the missed collection to BBLP; it was suggested that the Ward Councillor may be able to intervene to ensure future collections are not missed.

A member of the public raised a complaint that the grass at Scotch Firs has not been cut. It was noted that BBLP had confirmed to the Parish Council that the grass was scheduled to be cut on a monthly basis, and that the Clerk is already communicating with them.

5) **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Members considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 12th July 2023.

It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

6) **Local Council Award Scheme:**

a) **Quality Gold Award:** Members were informed that the Parish Council has been awarded Quality Gold in the Local Council Award Scheme, the first in Herefordshire to achieve the award. The Chairman commended all councillors for their contributions and in particular Cllr Lavinia Smith and the Clerk for ensuring that the rigorous standards required to achieve Quality Gold status were met.

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b)	<p>Q2 Action Plan Review: Members were informed that Cllr Lavinia Smith and the Clerk had reviewed the Action Plan at the end of Quarter 2. It was agreed that good progress is being made. It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk would upload the Action Plan Review Document to the website.</p>	HT
c)	<p>Village Walkaround: Members were asked to consider dates for a second village walkaround to identify general village maintenance and areas for improvement. A Wednesday evening was agreed. It was RESOLVED: that the Clerk would propose a selection of dates during September/October.</p>	HT
7)	<p>To Comment on Planning Applications for Determination by Herefordshire Council:</p>	
a)	<p>232195, Land adjacent to Fownhope Medical Centre. Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 171637 (site for residential development of up to ten dwellings with associated vehicle access). The Chairman presented a detailed summary of the application and the reserved matters under consideration.</p>	
2)	<p>With the permission of the meeting, the Chairman varied the order of the agenda:</p>	
	<p>To Co-opt Parish Councillor to fill current vacancy:</p>	
	<p>It was RESOLVED: to elect Claire Patel onto the Parish Council. Cllr Patel duly signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the members at the council table.</p>	HT/CP
7a)	<p>232195, Land adjacent to Fownhope Medical Centre. The Chairman continued the presentation and then invited members of the public to comment. A considerable number of objections were raised and noted. Whilst commenting via HC website had closed, the Ward Councillor offered to meet with residents and provide feedback to the Planning Officer; and members of the public were informed that representations can still be submitted to the Case Officer if the application has not yet been determined.</p>	
	<p>It was unanimously RESOLVED: to OBJECT to the proposed application, as detailed in Appendix A.</p>	HT
	<p>19 members of the public left the meeting.</p>	
	<p>With the permission of the meeting, the Chairman again varied the order of the agenda:</p>	
4)	<p>Report from Ward Councillor: Ward Cllr Biggs reported:</p>	
	<p>4.1 A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Herefordshire, Shropshire, Powys and Monmouthshire councils but it was confirmed Herefordshire's resources will be spent in Herefordshire;</p>	
	<p>4.2 The proposed library move to the Shire Hall will be considered by full council in October;</p>	
	<p>4.3 Job opportunities in market towns across the county are being encouraged.</p>	
	<p>The Chairman returned to the order of the agenda but noted that some items may need to be deferred as a result of the time given to the planning item. Some other discussions may be shortened to priority items only.</p>	
7)	<p>To Comment on Planning Applications for Determination by Herefordshire Council:</p>	
b)	<p>231392 & 3 LBC, Nash Farm, HR1 4PS. Proposed creation of a new access from the highway, a driveway, garage and car port building. Members considered the application; no objections were raised.</p>	
	<p>It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the proposed application. Cllr Tim Jones abstained from voting in accordance with his declaration of interest.</p>	HT
c)	<p>232365, Broadmoor Cottage, Woolhope, HR1 4QX. Proposed single and two storey rear extension and single storey link to join existing carport, which is to be converted to a hobby room under permitted development. It was noted that this property is in a neighbouring parish; members raised no objections but observed that the extension seems large when compared with the size of the cottage.</p>	
	<p>It was RESOLVED: to submit a GENERAL COMMENT accordingly.</p>	HT
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<p>d)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p> <p>d)</p> <p>9)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>10)</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p> <p>d)</p> <p>e)</p> <p>f)</p>	<p>232256, 2 West Villas, HR1 4NN. Works to Trees in a Conservation Area. Members were informed that this application has been decided and works can proceed.</p> <p>To Note Report on Planning Decisions Made by Herefordshire Council: It was noted:</p> <p>231863, Land opposite Mill House Farm. Proposed non material amendment to PP 222861. Approved with conditions.</p> <p>231690/1, 2 Fownhope Court, HR1 4PB. Proposed installation of solar panels on the flat & pitched roofs of existing house including the extension which already has permission to be built. Approved with conditions.</p> <p>231599 Fownhope House, HR1 4PE. Listed Building Maintenance. Withdrawn.</p> <p>231704/5, Stone House, HR1 4PJ. Proposed replacement extension and alterations to outbuildings. Approved with conditions.</p> <p>To Consider Other Matters related to Planning:</p> <p>Voluntary Registration of Tan Brook: this item was deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p>To consider response to Wye Valley AONB Consultation on Planning and Position Statements: Members were asked to consider a PC response. Concerns were raised about the lack of direction concerning dark skies and the lack of content on addressing the level of phosphates in the River Wye. It was RESOLVED: that Cllr Kevin Braybrook would draft a response on dark skies, and Cllr Gareth Williams would draft a response on phosphates.</p> <p>Finance and Policy:</p> <p>Finance Report: Members received a financial report attached to these minutes as Appendix B. It was RESOLVED: to approve the report. The Finance Working Group will consider the investments at the next meeting.</p> <p>External Audit 2022/23: Members were informed that the audit has been concluded and no concerns have been identified. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published in accordance with legislation.</p> <p>Parish Council Funding for Churchyard Maintenance: Members were informed that an amendment to the Local Government Act 1894 has been accepted by Government and will now pass through the House of Lords and the House of Commons to become law. Members wished to recognise the efforts of a parishioner in achieving this conclusion. It was RESOLVED: to include a budget to support the maintenance of the Churchyard for 2024/25 in anticipation of the change in law.</p> <p>To consider financial contribution to Fownhope Strollers for cricket nets: this item was deferred to the FRFA report.</p> <p>To receive update and consider next actions concerning Playground S106 money: Members received a brief update following a very positive meeting with Herefordshire Council. It was confirmed that the Parish Council can apply for the funds to deliver the project in-house with support from Herefordshire Council as needed.</p> <p>Payments: It was RESOLVED: to ratify the following payments made between meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adrian Hope Tree Services, Annual Tree Survey 27th June, £295.00 plus VAT • Helen Tinson, Salary July, £851.90 <p>It was RESOLVED: to approve the following invoices for payment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nick Maddy Coaches, Bus Service July and August, £360.00 • FRFA, Meeting Room Hire July, £20.00 	<p>HT</p> <p>KB/GW</p> <p>FWG</p> <p>HT 290/09 /2324 3 of 6</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzi Bruce, P3, £851.00 • Suzi Bruce, Grass Cutting & Lengthsman, £120.00 • Suzi Bruce, P3, £211.90 plus £10.38 VAT • Suzi Bruce, Grass Cutting & Lengthsman, £85.00 • Suzi Bruce, Lengthsman, Grass Cutting and P3, £210.00 • Suzi Bruce, P3, £550.00 • Helen Tinson, Salary August, £851.90 • PKF Littlejohn, External Audit, £210.00 plus £42.00 VAT 		
11)	<p>Policies and Procedures: this item was deferred to the next meeting.</p>	HT
12)	<p>Highways:</p>	
a)	<p>There was no report from the Highways Working Group.</p>	
b)	<p>Traffic Calming Scheme: Members were informed that a meeting has taken place with HC and BBLP. Many of the initial proposals have been approved including widening the pavement past the West End Stores. The scheme still needs to be costed, and assuming it falls within budget, is due for completion by 31st March 2024. The full report is attached to the minutes as Appendix C.</p>	
c)	<p>HC Funded Lengthsman Scheme 2023/24:</p>	
	<p>Members were informed that the grant and additional matched funding has been confirmed.</p>	
13)	<p>Environment:</p>	
a)	<p>Members received a report from the Environment Working Group:</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herefordshire Green Network is in the process of transferring ownership of the Great Collaboration website to another national body to take forward and roll out nationally. Members were informed that there has been no monetary gain and will be no future monetary gain. They were asked to confirm if they wish to assert any rights of ownership before the transfer is complete. It was RESOLVED: not to assert any rights of ownership, and to minute the achievement of the Environment Group and Cllr Gareth Williams for their contribution in getting the portal to this stage. 	HT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next EG meeting is scheduled for 7pm on Tuesday 18th September at the Green Man; with the next Fownhope Community Saturday event on the 23rd September, 2-4pm at the Pavilion. 	
b)	<p>Annual Tree Survey: Members considered two quotations for the work identified in the Annual Tree Survey, carried out on 27th June 2023.</p>	
	<p>It was RESOLVED: to instruct Contractor A for Quotation B - Sheershill Common at a cost of £880.00 plus VAT; and Contractor B for Quotations A - Green Lane, C - Land at Tan Brook and D – Court Gardens, at a total cost of £1,575.00 plus VAT.</p>	HT
c)	<p>Asian Hornet: Members considered the environmental threat to the Wye Valley raised by the Asian Hornet.</p>	
	<p>It was RESOLVED: to ask the Environment Group to consider at the next meeting and in the meantime to raise awareness via the Fownhope Flag, Village Facebook, website and newsletters sharing a photograph of the insect and details of what to do in the event of a sighting.</p>	HT/EG
14)	<p>Footpaths:</p>	
a)	<p>Members were informed that the Lengthsman has carried out a significant amount of work clearing footpaths following the increased funding agreed. The Footpaths Officer will be proposing some priority routes for regular maintenance next year.</p>	
b)	<p>Bridleway FWA6: Members were informed that one quotation to clear the fallen tree and cut back the overhang has been received, but one is still awaited. It was RESOLVED: to accept the lower quotation when both have been received and proceed to schedule work as quickly as possible.</p>	HT 291/09 /2324 4 of 6

c)	<p>Footpath FWB8: Members considered concerns about the reinstated footpath and were informed that the footpath has now been raised and a hedge will be installed between the footpath and the bank. It was RESOLVED: to ask the developer to install a temporary fence to prevent falls onto the B4224.</p>	HT
15) a)	<p>FRFA: Members were asked to consider a proposal by the Fownhope Strollers to install fixed cricket nets on the Recreation Field. Two possible locations were proposed, though the FRFA had a clear preference for one location over the other. The FRFA have stipulated that if the installation is to proceed and the nets are closed, then there must be a facility for local people to have access to them, perhaps via combination lock. It was reported that this is acceptable to the Strollers. It was confirmed that the preferred location does not encroach on the Public Right of Way; and that the Strollers will either offer the structure to the PC for community use, or remove it in its entirety, should they no longer wish to use it. It was RESOLVED: to support the proposal.</p>	MS
16) a)	<p>Community: Coronation Booklet: this item was deferred to the next meeting.</p>	HT
b)	<p>Living in the Wye Valley AONB: Members considered a revised draft document that has been written to summarise actions residents can consider to protect and nurture the environment within the AONB. It is proposed that the document is included in the Welcome Pack for new residents and published in the Fownhope Flag and on the website for general information. It was RESOLVED: to approve the revised text and publish the document.</p>	HT
c)	<p>Parish Celebration: Members were asked to consider a Parish Celebration to launch the Fownhope Coronation Walk and celebrate the Quality Gold Award. Cllr Morris proposed the weekend of 7/8 October. It was RESOLVED: to organise the inaugural walk and follow up with refreshments and celebration afterwards; and to publish the date and the walk in the centre pages of the Fownhope Flag. It was RESOLVED: to approve a budget of up to £300.</p>	HT/KB WM
d)	<p>Local Policing Community Charter: Members were asked to consider the top three priorities for Q3 (Oct-Dec). It was RESOLVED: to submit the same priorities as Q2 – Speeding; Criminal Damage (Pavilion); and Thefts (outbuildings).</p>	HT
17) a)	<p>Recruitment and Training: HALC Training: Members were reminded of a group training session booked with HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils) on Wednesday 20th September, 7-9pm.</p>	
b)	<p>Recruitment and Retention of New Councillors: Members were informed that the vacancies are being advertised via the usual channels; any ideas for other ways to recruit would be welcomed.</p>	
18)	<p>Next Meeting: 7pm, Wednesday 4th October 2023. Agenda items raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider a new Planning Policy • To consider and approve the Risk Management Policy and Risk Register • To receive and consider update on Playground S106 • To receive feedback on the Coronation Booklet • To consider voluntary registration of Tan Brook Land Ownership <p>Meeting closed.</p>	292/09 /2324 5 of 6

Signed Dated

Chairman

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Appendix A: Parish Council Response to Planning Consultation 232195

232195: Land adjacent to Fownhope Medical Centre. Approval of reserved matters following outline approval 171637 (Site for residential development of up to ten dwellings with associated vehicle access).

Thank you for allowing an extension to enable the Parish Council to consider their response to the above planning consultation.

The Parish Council carefully considered the application at a meeting of full council on 6th September and, following extensive discussions with parishioners, resolved to OBJECT for the following reasons:

Scale – FPC applaud the inclusion of 2 and 3 bed semi-detached homes on this development, which will bring much needed homes within the reach of younger local families. However, we are concerned that the 6 detached homes, all of which include 2 or more bathrooms and a study which may be used as an additional bedroom, will be priced at a level above the means of many local families. The site was allocated in the Fownhope Neighbourhood Plan for “homes contributing primarily to local need” and while we accept the District Valuers conclusion that the site could not support discounted affordable housing, we would like to see more of the smaller 2 or 3 bed semi-detached homes included in the development. As the Fownhope Neighbourhood Plan has regained full weight, we expect HC planning department to take into account Policy FW9 when considering this application.

Section 21 of the Fownhope Neighbourhood Plan states that residents wish “new development to respect the scale and setting of neighbouring buildings”. We concur with the suggestion made by the Wye Valley AONB that adopting the 1.5 storey approach across the development would improve integration with the existing settlement and improve the medium distance views.

Residents expressed continued concern at the ability of Common Hill Lane to accommodate both construction traffic during the construction phase and the increased traffic flow that will result from new residents on completion of the scheme. The Transport Statement submitted in support of the Outline Planning Application approved in November 2020 was prepared in June 2016, based upon data collected in September and November 2015. Over the past 8 years, the volume of vehicles using Common Hill Lane has increased considerably following expansion of the medical centre and automated dispensing service, the increased popularity of online shopping and supermarket delivery and the propensity for drivers from the Woolhope area to use Common Hill Lane as a short cut to the Medical Centre, School and Wye Leisure. We would like to see details of the measures that the developer will put in place to mitigate disruption and potential danger to residents, drivers and pedestrians during the construction phase and suggest that an updated Traffic Survey be conducted to ascertain the feasibility of the proposed access arrangements under current traffic conditions.

Concern was also expressed regarding the ability of Fownhope sewage works to manage the increased outflow. Welsh Water originally stated that the works could not handle the additional outflow from the Mill Field and Potato Barn developments, however, this decision was apparently reversed and both sites have been connected to the main sewer. We would like confirmation from Welsh Water that the additional volume generated from the three sites (Mill Field, Potato Barn and Medical Centre) will not result in an increased incidence of sewage spills into the River Wye.

Layout – The location of plots 7,8,9 and 10 on the south-west side of the access road places them immediately adjacent to existing homes in Church Croft. If Plots 7,8,9 and 10 were relocated to the north-east side of the access road and the public open space located between the access road and homes in Church Croft, this would provide an open space buffer zone between the existing and new homes and give the new homes a view of open fields.

Appearance – Black timber cladding, large glass patio doors and aluminium front doors give an urbanised feel to the development. We feel that a mix of stone and brick construction with traditional timber doors and windows would sit more sympathetically with the rural nature of the site.

Landscaping – Both Fownhope Parish Council and residents are concerned at the loss of an extensive stretch of mature hedgerow along the north side of Common Hill Lane. We understand that removal of the hedgerow is necessary to facilitate the relocation of the drainage ditch, following HC advice that the ditch should not be culverted. Policy FW7e) of the Fownhope Neighbourhood Plan states proposals will be supported that “retain stone walls, tree cover and hedgerow”. We therefore request that HC reconsider their approach and work with the developer to formulate a drainage scheme that protects as much established hedgerow as possible.

We also agree with the Wye Valley AONB that estate railings and boarded fencing is out of keeping with the rural setting of the site and request that native hedging be used wherever feasible.

We are pleased to see the inclusion of public open space on the site and request confirmation that the space will be maintained by the developer or homeowners, will remain open to the public in perpetuity and that the footpath through the site will become part of the PROW network.

We have been advised that Freemans intend to build a storage compound on land adjacent to the site and will presumably store excess soil in a similar manner to Mill field. We would like a condition that the compound and any excess soil be removed as soon as possible following completion of construction and the land returned to its current state.

With kind regards
Helen Tinson
Clerk to Fownhope Parish Council

Appendix B: Finance Report

REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 6th September 2023

REPORT BY: Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

AGENDA ITEM: 10a

Bank Balances:

Lloyds:	£4,954.27 (excludes payments to be approved 6.9.23)
Lloyds Reserve:	£24,725.89
Hargreaves Lansdown:	£22,444.98 (at 4.9.23)
Total funds held across all banks and investments at 4.9.23 =	£52,125.14

Welsh Water: Have paid £1677.75 in settlement of the additional costs incurred for material cost increases due to the delays investigating the location/cause of a water leak on the Recreation Field.

Investments: The investment capital is reducing further and stands at £22,444.98 at 4/9/23. I raised a query with the PC’s IAG Advisor, who presented a detailed response noting the continuation of healthy dividends and recommending that investments are not sold during the currently distressed market.

FiPL Grant: The FiPL grant has been amended to account for the reduction in gates and will now include some additional expenditure. The grant has been reduced from £4,742.46 to £4,502.82.

Next scheduled Finance Working Group Meeting is 6.30pm on Tuesday 26th September

Appendix C: Traffic Calming Report

REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 6th September 2023

REPORT BY: Kevin Braybrook

AGENDA ITEM: 12b

Stuart Eames and I attended a meeting with Herefordshire Council and Balfour Beatty yesterday to discuss progression of the traffic calming scheme. Several visits have been made to Fownhope and detailed plans have been drawn up for the following programme of works:

- Road Narrowing lines, 30mph roundels and tan blocks at junctions to be implemented as originally discussed. The new white lines which were painted over the summer were done by a road marking team who were not aware of plans to remove the centre line and will be removed without cost impact to the £175,000 grant.
- Plans **include** widening the pavement at the west end bus stop to 1.5m with associated narrowing of the road

The above work still needs to be costed, but assuming that it comes within budget, will be covered by the £175,000 grant which must be spent this financial year, so work should be complete by March 2024.

- A location to re-site the start of the 30mph limit and install the village gateways has been identified between Mill Farm and The Granary. This work will be covered by the S106 money from the Mill Field development and will require a TRO (Traffic Regulation Order), which could take 12 months to process so is unlikely to be completed at the same time as the road narrowing programme. The road narrowing linings will be extended to the gateways when they are installed.
- Repair of potholes and resurfacing will not be included in the grant funded programme as Highways are responsible for funding ongoing road maintenance. It is possible that the narrowing lines will be put in place before resurfacing is completed, however, once in place, they will be repainted (at no cost to the grant or to Fownhope) by the surfacing team.
- The 20mph Pembridge trial has not demonstrated measurable reduction in traffic speed. This, together with a change in approach to traffic calming by the new HC administration, means that 20mph zones will not be implemented in villages throughout the county.